REMARKS

Claims 1-15 and 24-26 are present in this application, and all claims stand rejected under 35 USC 102 or 103 over Ma et al., IEDM, **97**, 535-538 (1997).

Firstly, claims 1-2, 5-15 and 24-26 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Ma. It is respectfully assumed that this rejection was intended to be based upon 35 USC 102(b) since Ma is manifestly not a patent or published patent application upon which a 35 USC 102(e) rejection could be based.

This rejection is traversed. In considering this rejection, it is convenient to consider the claims in three groups, namely (a) claim 1 and its dependent claims 2 and 5-11; (b) claim 12 and its dependent claims 13-15; and (c) claim 24 and its dependent claims 25 and 26, since the reasons why the claims are not anticipated by Ma differ among the three groups.

Firstly, with regard to claims 1-2 and 5-11, all these claims require a backplane comprising a patterned metal foil having a plurality of apertures extending therethrough. Ma does not disclose such a patterned film with multiple apertures. The Office Action states that Ma does disclose such a patterned metal foil and directs attention to Figure 2(a) of Ma. With respect, Ma's Figure 2(a) manifestly does not show any apertures extending through the metal foil (the lowest layer of the structure as illustrated), but rather shows this foil as continuous. Furthermore, there are several passages in the text of Ma which show that Ma's metal foil is in fact continuous. Firstly, Ma states (page 20.6.1, right column, sole complete paragraph) that "As-rolled 304 stainless steel foil serves as the substrate." As the Examiner is no doubt aware, as-rolled 304 stainless steel foil is in the form of a continuous sheet. Secondly, the next sentence in the same paragraph states that "Planarization with 0.5 μm thick spin-on glass removes the short wavelength roughness of 0.3 μm rms." One cannot spin coat on a substrate which already has apertures extending therethrough since the material being spin coated would largely end up in the apertures, and at the very least the desired smooth thin spin coated layer would be severely disrupted by the presence of the apertures. Hence, there cannot

be any apertures in Ma's substrate when the spin coating is effected. Thirdly, there is absolutely nothing in Ma which hints at any formation of apertures after the spin coating step. Finally, at two points (page 20.6.1, left column, second paragraph, penultimate sentence, and page 20.6.2, left column, lines 4-5 of the text) Ma states that his substrate is opaque, which would not be true of a substrate containing numerous apertures. Hence, for all the foregoing reasons, Ma does not disclose a metal foil substrate containing apertures and does not anticipate any of claims 1-2 and 5-11.

With regard to claims 12-15, the rejection is traversed on the grounds that Ma does not disclose any backplane comprising at least one conductive via extending through a polymeric material and electrically connecting at least one thin film electronic device to a metal foil, as required by all of claims 12-15. The Office Action states that Ma does disclose a backplane including such a conductive via, directing attention to Figure 2(a) and page 20.6.2 of Ma. However, with respect, Figure 2(a) does not show any such conductive via, the SiN and glass layers being shown as continuous, Furthermore, the description of the formation of the TFT and the OLED on the substrate given on page 20.6.2 make no reference to any formation of a conductive via, and indeed it is far from clear how one would form such a via through continuous SiN and glass layers. Hence, for the foregoing reasons, Ma does not disclose a backplane having a conductive via and does not anticipate any of claims 12-15.

With regard to claims 24-26, the rejection is traversed on the grounds that Ma does not disclose any electro-optic display with a peripheral portion having a plurality of apertures extending through the metal substrate, by means of which apertures the electro-optic display may be stitched to a flexible medium, as required by all of claims 24-26. The Office Action states that Ma does disclose a display having such a peripheral portion and directs attention to Figures 1 and 2(a) and pages 20.6.1-20.6.2. With respect, neither Figure 1 nor Figure 2(a) of Ma indicate the presence of *any* apertures in the substrate, much less apertures confined to a peripheral portion thereof, and (as discussed above with reference to claims 1-2 and 5-11) Ma contains nothing to

suggest the presence of any apertures in his substrate and several passages inconsistent with the presence of such apertures. Accordingly, Ma does not anticipate any of claims 24-26.

The 35 USC 103 rejection of claims 3 and 4 over Ma is traversed for the same reasons as the 35 USC 102 rejection of claim 1, as discussed above.

For the foregoing reasons, the 35 USC 102 and 103 rejections set out in the aforementioned Office Action are unjustified and should be withdrawn. Reconsideration and allowance of all claims remaining in this application is respectfully requested.

Since the normal period for responding the Office Action expired December 16, 2005, a Petition for a two month extension of this period is filed herewith.

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